

The Linacre Quarterly

Volume 39 | Number 1

Article 3

February 1972

From the Editor's Desk

Catholic Physicians' Guild

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Recommended Citation

Catholic Physicians' Guild (1972) "From the Editor's Desk," *The Linacre Quarterly*: Vol. 39: No. 1, Article 3.
Available at: <http://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol39/iss1/3>

From The Editor's Desk



John P. Mullooly, M.D.

One of the highlights of the annual meeting of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians' Guilds held in New Orleans in November, 1971 was the spirited discussion of the revised Catholic Hospital Code. The new code which is entitled "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Facilities" is published in this issue. Perusal of these Directives which were overwhelmingly approved by the Bishops of the United States in November, 1971 will reveal an unswerving adherence to the doctrinal content of *Humanae Vitae*. Delegates to the annual meeting unanimously approved a resolution commending the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for exercising their teaching authority. The delegates also recognized that "some Catholic physicians applying the principle of informed conscience, dissent from some of the directives." As expected, the inevitable reaction to these Directives has begun. The various directions of this reaction is reflected in several articles in this issue.

As noted in an earlier bulletin from our Executive Secretary and Managing Editor, Robert H. Herzog, the delegates authorized a "permanent committee of physicians" to study and review medical ethical problems on a continuing basis and urged a meeting to discuss the Directives with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Furthermore, the delegates to the NFCPG also recommended that all local guilds form similar committees to discuss the Directives with their local bishops. Needless to say, it will be some time before the dust settles regarding these new Directives.

As these committees are established, and the Directives are discussed, let us hope that the spirit and attitude that will prevail in their deliberations will be one of respect for the teaching authority of the Church. The ideal spirit that should pervade these discussions was succinctly described by Rev. John P. Raynor, S.J., the Presi-

dent of Marquette University when he welcomed the Catholic Biblical Association to Marquette at their annual meeting in September, 1971:

"You have been recognized as scholars and recognized as servants to the Church precisely by your scholarship. You deal with one of the most delicate areas of faith commitment, the very foundations of Christian life and thought. It is an area which the Church has always cherished, watched over with great solicitude, which the magisterium has again and again insisted belongs to itself in a special way. Yet you have gained a universal reputation for working scientifically, facing all the facts. You have made yourselves thoroughly acceptable to your colleagues of other faiths, while leaving no doubt about your loyalty to our own faith."

As Catholic physicians who have a loyalty and commitment to our faith, it is our duty toward our patients, profession and our God to debate and clarify the medical aspects of the human problems with which we are daily confronted. Hopefully, from these candid discussions will evolve some clarifications of our ethical obligations toward our patients, our family and society.

John P. Mullooly, M.D.
Editor

Letters to the Editor...

Praise for Linacre Forum

To the Editor:

Congratulations on your excellent performance as Editor of the Linacre.

The Federation can justly be proud of the forum of opinion it has in the pages of the Linacre.

Charles Bauda, MD
President-Elect
National Federation, Catholic
Physicians Guilds

counselling our clients who very often are poorly informed on the subject. Your November edition had two excellent articles regarding "Life" which we thoroughly enjoyed.

Mrs. Robert M. Higgins
Birthright Volunteer
Birthright-Monmouth County
Neptune, N.J.

"BIRTHRIGHT" VOLUNTEER AP- PLAUDS "LIFE" ARTICLES

To the Editor:

Our Birthright Agency would appreciate copies of any articles printed by you regarding abortion which have appeared in the "Linacre Quarterly".

We are sure they will be of great value in

UROLOGIST CRITICIZES PROHIBITIONS ON FERTILITY WORKUPS

To the Editor:

Your "From the Editor's Desk" in the August 1971 issue regarding controversial articles suggested to me that at this time a reassessment by Catholic physicians should be made of the present treatment of the Catholic infertile couple. Two areas of present prohibition are worthy of immediate re-examination: